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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 29, 2025, at 5 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, JULY 28, 2025

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we turn to You this afternoon aware of our insufficiency. Keep us from forgetting that human efforts and ingenuity are powerless without You. You alone, O Lord, deserve honor and praise, for power, glory, and victory belong to You.

Lord, infuse our lawmakers with Your might, be for them as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Give them such wisdom that their work will enable America to stand with freedom's lamp aloft. As our Senators tackle today's task, make them conscious of their great heritage of liberty and justice for all. May no weapon that is formed be able to defeat this land we love.

We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BUDD). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Samuel Brown, of Nevada, to be Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Memorial Affairs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

MEDICAID

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, Congress, 3 weeks ago, passed the One Big Beautiful Bill, and in that bill was a modest, cost-sharing requirement for able-bodied Medicaid expansion of adults that were making more than 100 percent of poverty.

The cost-sharing requirements would not apply to primary, prenatal, pediatric, mental, substance abuse disorder, emergency room care, or care provided by community health centers, certified behavioral health clinics, or rural health clinics.

Now, under the One Big Beautiful Bill, this cost sharing that is required for able-bodied Medicaid adults can't exceed \$35 per visit, and there is an annual maximum limit of no more than 5 percent of an individual's income.

Well, you might ask: Why cost sharing? Having a modest cost sharing ensures consumers have skin in the game and thus, in turn, be responsible healthcare consumers.

Adults in Medicare earning between 100 and 133 percent of poverty are most likely to gain health insurance through the Federal marketplace or through an employer, where cost sharing is common. Despite fearmongering about cost-share requirements, establishing modest cost-sharing requirements in Medicaid is not anything brandnew. It has been around for quite a while.

So let me give you a little bit of history. The Obama administration approved a half dozen Medicaid waivers, including my home State of Iowa, to establish modest cost sharing for able-bodied Medicaid adults.

Congress, in addition, has enabled cost sharing before. Obama made that move. In the 2005 Deficit Reduction Act, which included my Family Opportunity Act, we expanded State flexibility in Medicaid to let States establish cost sharing up to 10 percent of the cost of services for those making over the poverty limit.

The law also lets hospitals impose cost sharing for nonemergency services provided in the emergency department. The cost-sharing policies had support from the Governors of both parties, from a National Governors Association working group. At a 2005 Finance Committee hearing that I chaired, Governors said modest Medicaid sharing "[utilizes] market forces and personal responsibility to improve health care delivery."

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Another example is in the 1990s, Congress enabled cost sharing in the Children's Health Insurance Program. To this day, States are allowed and do impose cost sharing in that program. Even socialist proposals like Medicare for All have also included cost sharing.

So I want to make very clear: This is nothing new. Modest cost sharing is a commonsense policy for those benefitting from a government program and who have the means to pay for it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I know that August is approaching, but we still have some serious work to do here in Washington. We need to make further progress on appropriations, and we have a number of President Trump's nominations to get through.

Despite a historic level of obstruction from Democrats, Senate Republicans have been maintaining a brisk pace on confirming President Trump's nominees. We have confirmed 107 civilian nominees, nearly doubling the pace in President Trump's first administration at this point. And we have done it with good, old-fashioned hard work.

Thanks in substantial part to our commitment to getting President Trump's team in place, the Senate has taken 437 votes so far this year, which is more than in any Congress at this point in the last 35-plus years.

In fact, we have taken more votes in 2025 already, in less than 7 months, than the Senate has taken in a full 12 months for 32 of the past 36 years.

So we have kept up a very intense pace. But there are a number of nominees still waiting for confirmation, and we are going to get through a lot more of them soon.

And so we can do this the easy way or the hard way, and that is really up to Senate Democrats.

As I said, we have confirmed President Trump's civilian nominees at nearly double the pace of his first administration so far through a lot of hours spent here in the Senate, but we would have a lot more nominees confirmed at this point if Democrats hadn't decided to drag out every nomination.

Democrats have not allowed a single civilian Trump nominee to pass by unanimous consent or voice vote, even when Democrats have ultimately ended up supporting the nomination in significant numbers. I refer to this as a historic level of obstruction, and I mean it.

President Trump is the only President on record—the only President on

record—to not have a single one of his civilian nominees confirmed by unanimous consent or voice vote at this point in his Presidency—the only President on record.

Now, just to offer a point of comparison here, by this point in his Presidency, President Biden had 44 civilian nominees confirmed by voice vote. President Trump hasn't had 1—44 for Biden, 0 for President Trump. So when I say this is a historic level of obstruction from Democrats, I mean it. That is not a Republican talking point; it is just a fact.

Democrats haven't offered a shred of courtesy to President Trump, to the voters who elected him, or to the people who have stepped up to serve our country in his administration.

So the ball is in Democrats' court. They can continue to drag out the process on even the most uncontroversial nominees and we can spend a lot more hours with each other in the Senate Chamber or they can rein in their reflexive, anti-Trump sentiment and allow some of his rank-and-file nominees to proceed by unanimous consent or voice vote, just as Republicans did when the roles were reversed.

I would remind my colleagues about the dangerous and ugly precedent they are setting here, but the choice is theirs. But whether it is the slow way or the fast way, we are getting President Trump's nominees confirmed.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, while Senate Republicans have been focused on pushing partisan politics that would crush middle-class Americans all to pay for tax cuts for billionaires, while House Republicans are ignoring their responsibility to fund the government by leaving town early for the Epstein recess, and while the Trump administration continues to push policies that are sending costs up, chaos up, corruption up, Senate Democrats and House Democrats—myself, Leader JEFFRIES, and both of our caucuses—are fighting to build a new vision for America. I am working closely with Leader JEFFRIES, alongside Senator KLOBUCHAR and Congresswoman DINGELL, on a united vision.

The American people are fed up with the costs, chaos, and corruption of the Trump administration and the aiding and abetting Republicans have done at his behest.

Republican policies have sent the price of groceries, housing utility bills, essential goods, and more skyrocketing.

They have gutted healthcare and essential services for working families, like Medicare and Medicaid. They have spiked healthcare premiums and put hospitals around the country in crisis mode. Many are talking about closing, and a few have already closed, leaving people without the healthcare they need—all for tax cuts for billionaires.

They have unleashed rampant levels of corruption and warped our democracy, empowering the wealthy and well-connected to profit off the backs of working families. Donald Trump seems to be at the top of the list in using his government position to make personal profit.

But Senate and House Democrats are fighting back. Democrats are fighting to lower the high costs of living, which have become far too expensive for American families.

We are fighting to strengthen our communities, make our streets safer, and protect essential services that millions of people rely on every single day.

Instead of further breaking our healthcare system—ripping healthcare away from millions—we think the healthcare system should be easier, not harder, for Americans to access and navigate and to afford. We are also fighting to fix our broken healthcare system to make sure that people who need the care can get it and be able to afford it.

We are fighting to rid our government of the scourge of corruption. There is so much corruption and self-dealing and rich people—billionaires—getting richer in terms of how they operate and what the government passes and doesn't pass. We are fighting to rid our government of that scourge. It has run rampant—the scourge of corruption has run rampant—under Donald Trump and Republicans. It is one of the most corrupt administrations in American history.

The bottom line is this: Senate and House Democrats are united in creating an America that works better for everyone, not just the wealthy, not just the well-connected, and we will use every tool at our disposal in the appropriations process and beyond to fight back against the disastrous Donald Trump and Republican agenda.

EUROPEAN UNION TRADE DEAL

Now, Mr. President, on the trade deal, over the weekend, Donald Trump announced a new trade “deal” with the European Union. It will result in a \$90 billion-per-year tax hike on American families. When you raise tariffs, the American families pay for it, a \$90 billion tax on American families in this tariff deal with the European Union.

Donald Trump is, as usual, trying to hype up, exaggerate, and lie—Donald Trump almost always lies—about his accomplishments, and this is no exception. In Trump's frenzy to divert attention away from the Epstein scandal, Trump is, once again, totally making things up.

And what does the American consumer get out of this tax hike? A 15-